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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DRC-01 IGA-02 AID-20 PM-07 NSC-07

SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01 PRS-01 PA-04 USIA-15 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 H-03 EUR-25 IO-14 /148 W

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P 061145Z MAR 74
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2388
SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 6 SAIGON 2978

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS, VS

SUB: NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE ON U.S. ROLE IN VIETNAM

REF: STATE 037727, SAIGON 2548

COOPER _____
ELLIOTT _____
EROEBE _____
HORAN _____
HYLAND _____
JORDEN _____
KENNEDY _____
LENNAN _____
LODOL _____
RATLIFF _____
SAUNDERS _____
SOLMON _____
STERN _____

1. AS A PRELIMINARY TO DETAILED DISCUSSION OF SHIPLER NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE DATED SAIGON FEB. 16, IT IS NECESSARY TO RECORD THAT EMBASSY HAS LONG BEEN AWARE OF DECISIONS TAKEN LAST FALL IN HANOI TO MOUNT ALL-OUT CAMPAIGN THIS WINTER AND SPRING TO PERSUADE THE CONGRESS TO DRASTICALLY REDUCE THE MAGNITUDE OF BOTH ECONOMIC AND MILITARY AID TO THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM.

2. THE STOCKHOLM CONFERENCE WAS TO BE USED AS THE MAIN COORDINATING MECHANISM, AND THE PKG DELEGATION IN PARIS WAS TO BE THE PRINCIPAL CHANNEL USING THE REMNANTS OF THE AMERICAN "PEACE MOVEMENT" TO BRING INFLUENCE TO BEAR ON SELECTIVE SUSCEPTIBLE, BUT INFLUENTIAL, ELEMENTS OF AMERICAN COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA AND, PARTICULARLY, ON SUSCEPTIBLE CONGRESSIONAL STAFFERS. THE TIMING PREFERRED WAS TO BEGIN WITH INSERTION OF AS MUCH MATERIAL AS POSSIBLE IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, HOPEFULLY TO SECURE CONDEMNATION OF THE GVN IN FORMAL REPORTS OF CONGRESSIONAL SUBCOMMITTEES, WHICH COULD THEN BE FOLLOWED UP AND GIVEN WIDE CIRCULATION BY "INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING" WHICH WOULD TEND TO CONFIRM AND IF POSSIBLE TO EXPAND ON THE DISTORTIONS THEY HAD BEEN

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ABLE TO HAVE INSERTED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL SUB-COMMITTEE FORMAL REPORTS.

3. LOOKING AT THE SHIPLER ARTICLE, PARAGRAPH BY PARAGRAPH, THE US MISSION HAS THE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS:

4. PARAS 1-3 -- RAY HARRIS IS A GENERAL ELECTRIC EMPLOYEE AT BIEN HOA AIR BASE. HIS JOB IS CLASSIFIED AS A CLEANER OF PARTS AND EQUIPMENT. SHIPLER'S FIGURE OF 2,800 DAO CIVILIAN CONTRACTORS IS ESSENTIALLY CORRECT. THE CURRENT COUNT IS 2,752; A FIGURE PROVIDED BY DAO. SHIPLER DOES NOT BOTHER TO RECORD AT THIS POINT THAT THE NUMBER HAS BEEN REDUCED WITHIN THE PAST YEAR FROM SOME 5,000. HE DOES, HOWEVER, MENTION A REDUCTION IN PARAGRAPH 37 OF HIS ARTICLE, SAYING INACCURATELY THAT 2,200 HAVE LEFT SINCE JULY. HE DOES NOT RECORD FACT AVAILABLE TO HIM THAT HARRIS IS PART OF A GROUP OF CONTRACT EMPLOYEES WHOSE FUNCTION IS TO TEACH THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE HOW TO SERVICE PROPERLY MILITARY EQUIPMENT TURNED OVER TO THE GVN AS WELL AS MAINTAIN IT UNTIL THE TRAINING PROCESS IS COMPLETED. NOR DOES SHIPLER RECORD THE FACT KNOWN TO HIM THAT CONTRACT PERSONNEL ARE CONTINUOUSLY WITHDRAWN WHEN TRAINING IS FINISHED. THE "PROGRAM OF MILITARY AID" DOES NOT "SET THE COURSE OF THE WAR," AS SHIPLER PUT IT. THE COURSE IS SET BY THE CONTINUOUS AND CONTINUING COMMUNIST BUILDUP AND EFFORTS OF THE RVNAF TO PROTECT THE POPULATION, LAND AND RESOURCES UNDER GVN CONTROL AT TIME OF THE CEASE FIRE FROM ACTUAL MILITARY ATTACKS MOUNTED BY THE OTHER SIDE, WHICH IS NOT MENTIONED IN THE ARTICLE.

5. PARA 4 -- THIS IS A CLASSIC. SHIPLER CATEGORICALLY POSTULATES "SOUTH VIETNAMESE VIOLATIONS" WITHOUT PRESENTING A SHRED OF EVIDENCE, AND ALLEGES AMERICAN MILITARY AID "DIRECTLY SUPPORTS" SUCH VIOLATIONS WHICH THEREBY "BREAKS THE SPIRIT OF THE ACCORDS." HE DOES RELUCTANTLY CONCEDE THAT "WHETHER THE UNITED STATES IS BREAKING THE LETTER OF THE AGREEMENT COULD PROBABLY BE ARGUED EITHER WAY." IT IS QUITE TRUE THAT TO HANDI "THE SPIRIT OF THE ACCORDS" WAS THAT THE AMERICANS WOULD DELIVER SOUTH VIETNAM BOUND HAND AND FOOT INTO THEIR HANDS. FORTUNATELY, ONLY A HANDFUL OF AMERICANS WOULD AGREE WITH THAT INTERPRETATION OF THE "SPIRIT OF THE ACCORDS."

6. PARAS 5 AND 6 -- NO AMERICANS, CONTRACTORS OR GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, ARE "INTEGRAL PARTS" OF THE RVNAF MILITARY SYSTEM.

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THEY PROVIDE LIMITED AND TEMPORARY TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ONLY TO HELP THE VIETNAMESE BECOME SELF-SUFFICIENT. TO DESCRIBE "PENTAGON-BASED GENERALS WHO TOUR AIRFIELDS" AS "INTEGRAL PARTS OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE SUPPLY, TRANSPORT AND INTELLIGENCE SYSTEMS" OBVIOUSLY DISTORTS THE MEANING OF THE WORD "INTEGRAL" TO THE BREAKING POINT. AMERICAN GENERALS VISIT NOT ONLY VIETNAM BUT OTHER FRIENDLY NATIONS THROUGHOUT SOUTHEAST ASIA. THEY ALSO OBSERVE THE USE BEING MADE OF MILITARY AID. (END-USE INSPECTION BY US PERSONNEL IS REQUIRED BY THE SECURITY ASSISTANCE ACT.) THE TERM "LIAISON MEN" PRESUMABLY REFERS TO DAO'S REGIONAL LIAISON OFFICERS. IT IS SIMPLY UNTRUE THAT THEY GIVE "ADVICE," AS SHIPLER REPORTS, AGAIN WITHOUT PRODUCING THE SLIGHTEST SCRAP OF EVIDENCE. EVEN IF PERMISSIBLE, NONE OF THE RLOS IS QUALIFIED. THEY ARE CIVILIANS WHO, IF THEY HAD PREVIOUS MILITARY EXPERIENCE, WERE ENLISTED MEN OR JUNIOR OFFICERS WITH LITTLE OR NO BATTLE MANAGEMENT TRAINING. IT IS UNLIKELY THAT ARVN OFFICERS WOULD HEED THEIR ADVICE EVEN IF THEY OFFERED IT. AND IT IS SIMPLY A FALSHOOD THAT THE CIA GIVES ANY "ADVICE" TO THE NATIONAL POLICE.

7. PARAS 7 AND 8 -- TOTAL BUDGET COST OF MILITARY AID TO THE GVN IN FY-74 IS 1059.2 MILLION. OF THE PROPOSED 390.8 MILLION INCREASE, IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT ABOUT ONE-THIRD IS ATTRIBUTABLE TO AMMUNITION. AMMUNITION IS EXPENDED AT A RATE OF 20 TO 50 PERCENT LESS THAN DURING THE LAST YEAR OF THE WAR, DUE TO US-IMPOSED CONSTRAINTS AND RVNAF SELF-IMPOSED MANAGEMENT CONTROLS. THE US DOES NOT "DUMP MILLIONS IN CASH INTO THE SAIGON GOVERNMENT'S DEFENSE BUDGET." THE US PUTS GOODS INTO THE ECONOMY WHICH ARE SOLD FOR PIASTERS AND THEN ASSIGNED FOR SUPPORT OF MUTUALLY AGREED PROGRAMS.

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SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01 PPS-01 PA-24 USIA-15 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 H-03 EUR-25 IG-14 /148 W

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2309

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y -- TEXT --

8. PARA 9 -- THIS PARAGRAPH IS ANOTHER CLASSIC EXAMPLE OF DISGUIISING PROPAGANDA UNDER THE PROTECTIVE RUBRIC OF "INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING." SHIPLER NOW ALLEGES THAT U.S. MILITARY AID IS INDISPENSABLE TO WHAT IS CATEGORICALLY DESCRIBED AS "THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY OF RESISTANCE TO ANY ACCOMMODATION WITH THE COMMUNISTS." THE IMPLICATION IS GLARINGLY OBVIOUS, ALTHOUGH UNSTATED, THAT THE GVN SHOULD DO SO. BEYOND DOUBT, THAT IS HANOI'S POSITION. IN THE NEXT SENTENCE, SHIPLER STATES THAT "MILITARILY, THE EXTENSIVE AID HAS ENABLED PRESIDENT NGUYEN VAN THIEU TO TAKE THE OFFENSIVE AT TIMES, LAUNCHING INTENSIVE ATTACKS WITH ARTILLERY AND JET FIGHTERS AGAINST VIET CONG HELD TERRITORY." SHIPLER DOES NOT THINK IT IMPORTANT TO INFORM THE READERS OF HIS PAPER THAT THE "HAT TIMES" IN THE ABOVE SENTENCE WERE RETALIATORY STRIKES SUCH AS THE ONES MADE AFTER THE COMMUNISTS SHELLED THE BIEN HOA AIR BASE AND LATER DESTROYED THE NHA BE PETROLEUM STORAGE TANKS, AND THAT THE GVN HAS A PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED POLICY OF TAKING RETALIATORY ACTION WHENEVER THE NVA/VC FORCES SO ATTACK GVN INSTALLATIONS. SINCE THERE IS NO MENTION OF THE THOUSANDS OF NVA/VC VIOLATIONS OF THE CEASE FIRE, THE ONLY LOGICAL ASSUMPTION IS THAT SHIPLER CONSIDERS IT A VIOLATION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT ONLY WHEN THE GVN RESPONDS TO THESE ATTACKS.

9. PARAS 10 AND 11 -- IN THESE PARAGRAPHS, THE BIAS OF THE



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ARTICLE BECOMES BRIBELY SERVICE, SHIPLER CONTENDS THAT AMERICAN AID PERMITS PRESIDENT THIEU TO FORCE A "POLITICAL SETTLEMENT", STATING THAT HE HAS REJECTED THE PARIS AGREEMENT'S PROVISION FOR GENERAL ELECTIONS, IN WHICH THE COMMUNISTS WOULD BE GIVEN ACCESS TO THE PRESS, PERMISSION TO GO OUTSIDE AND FREEDOM TO RALLY SUPPORT OPENLY AND WITHOUT INTERFERENCE FROM THE POLICE. MR. THIEU HAS OFFERED THE ELECTIONS, BUT "WITHOUT THE FREEDOMS." THIS STATEMENT IS A COMPLETE REVERSAL OF THE FACTS. THE PARIS AGREEMENT CALLED FOR A CEASE FIRE, THE WAY TO COME THE DELINEATION OF THE AREAS OF CONTROL, THE FORMATION OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF RECONCILIATION AND CONCORD WHICH WOULD PREPARE FOR ELECTIONS UNDER INTERNATIONALLY SUPERVISED CONTROL. THE LAST THING THE NVA/VC FORCES WOULD EVER ACCEPT IS THE HOLDING OF ELECTIONS, FOR UNDER TRUE, IMPARTIAL INTERNATIONAL CONTROLS THEY COULD NOT POSSIBLY RECEIVE MORE THAN TEN PERCENT OF THE VOTE. SO THEY HAVE NEVER OBSERVED THE CEASE FIRE. THEY HAVE NEVER PERMITTED THE BEGINNING OF EVEN DISCUSSION OF THE DELINEATION OF THE "AREAS OF CONTROL", ONE OF WHICH ARE NECESSARY PRELIMINARIES TO FORMATION OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF RECONCILIATION AND CONCORD, WHICH WOULD PREPARE FOR THE ELECTIONS. THEIR TACTIC HAS BEEN TO INSIST ON THE ITEMS ENUMERATED BY SHIPLER -- PARTICULARLY ACCESS TO THE PRESS. PRESIDENT THIEU HAS NEVER "REJECTED THE PARIS AGREEMENT'S PROVISION FOR GENERAL ELECTIONS". HE HAS, ON THE CONTRARY, REPEATEDLY PROPOSED DEFINITE DATES FOR ELECTIONS. IF THE NVA/VC FORCES WILL ACCEPT DEFINITELY A SPECIFIC DATE AND INTERNATIONAL SUPERVISION, ELECTIONS COULD BE AGREED UPON IMMEDIATELY WITH ALL THE FREEDOMS COVERED IN THE PARIS AGREEMENT. ALTHOUGH THESE ARE THE FACTS, SHIPLER IMPLIES THAT IT IS THE REVERSE OF THESE FACTS WHICH EXCUSE THE NVA/VC ATTACKS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY "MOSTLY WITH ARTILLERY AND ROCKET ATTACKS." SHIPLER DOES NOT THINK THE READERS OF THE NEW YORK TIMES WOULD BE INTERESTED IN THE FACT THAT THESE NVA/VC ARTILLERY AND ROCKET ATTACKS OFTEN HAVE THE POPULACE--CHILDREN AND UNARMED CIVILIANS-- AS THEIR MAIN TARGETS.

10. PARA 12-- SHIPLER IMPLIES SKEPTICISM WHEN HE REPORTS THAT "US INTELLIGENCE OFFICIALS CONTEND THAT.....THE NORTH VIETNAMESE HAVE SENT THOUSANDS OF TANKS AND ARTILLERY PIECES SOUTH IN VIOLATION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENTS." BEST INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES INDICATE THAT SINCE THE CEASEFIRE, NORTH VIETNAM HAS

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SENT INTO SOUTH VIETNAM AT LEAST 450 TANKS AND ABOUT 265 122 MM GUNS, ACCORDING TO DAO FIGURES. (THE GVN OFTEN CHARGES THAT NORTH VIETNAM HAS SENT 600 TANKS AND ARMORED VEHICLES SOUTH SINCE THE CEASE FIRE.) SHIPLER'S USE OF THE WORD "THOUSANDS" GIVES THE INTENDED IMPRESSION THAT THE US HAS EXAGGERATED THE INFILTRATION OF NVA WEAPONRY. SHIPLER FOLLOWS USE OF THE WORD "CONTENDS" WITH A FURTHER ATTACK ON CREDIBILITY OF THE EXTENT OF MILITARY BUILDUP BY POWERFUL NVA/VC FORCES BY POINTING OUT THAT "COMMUNISTS APPEAR MORE FRUGAL IN BATTLE WITH AMMUNITION...."

11. PARA 13-- MILITARY EXPERTS BELIEVE THAT ANY RESTRAINT ON NVA AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE IS A MATTER OF TACTICS RATHER THAN REAL OR EXPECTED SHORTAGES. THE FACT REMAINS THAT THE NVA HAS ENOUGH AMMO IN THE SOUTH TO SUPPORT A COUNTRY-WIDE OFFENSIVE AT THE 1972 LEVEL FOR AT LEAST ONE YEAR. ANOTHER FACTOR WHICH SHIPLER CONVENIENTLY IGNORES IS THAT ARVN POSITIONS ARE FIXED TO DEFEND BASES AND POPULATED AREAS. THEIR LOCATION IS KNOWN TO THE ENEMY. THEREFORE, FEW ROUNDS ARE NEEDED FOR EFFECTIVE FIRE. THE ENEMY STILL HITS AND RUNS. HIS PERMANENT BASES ARE OUTSIDE ARVN ARTILLERY RANGE AND ARVN GUNNERS MUST SEARCH FOR TARGETS, REGISTER AND THEN FIRE FOR EFFECT. ALL OF WHICH REQUIRES MORE AMMUNITION.

12. PARAS 14-16-- THE F-5A IS NOT THE "MAINSTAY OF THE VNAF. SOUTH VIETNAM'S WORK HORSES ARE THE A-1 AND A-37. GENERAL ELECTRIC, WHICH IS MENTIONED IN THESE PARAGRAPHS, PROVIDES TECHNICIANS WHO ASSIST THE VNAF WITH REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE OF GE-BUILT JET ENGINES. THIS IS NORMAL PRACTICE; GE PROVIDES THE SAME SERVICE TO THE USAF. SOME JET COMPONENTS ARE OF SUCH COMPLEXITY THAT ONLY THE MANUFACTURER HAS THE EXPERTISE TO REPAIR THEM. THE G-E CONTRACT IS NOT TYPICAL OF DAO CONTRACTS. IT IS TRUE THAT IS MAINLY AN AMERICAN WORK-SITUATION WITH LESS EMPHASIS ON VIETNAMESE TRAINING. NONETHELESS, CONSIDERABLE TRAINING PROGRAMS ARE CONDUCTED BY G-E AT DIEN HOA. THE SHOP WHICH SHIPLER VISITED HAS A NORMAL COMPLEMENT OF 302 VIETNAMESE AND ABOUT 50 AMERICANS.

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2300H

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13. PARAS 17-19 -- THE IMPLICATION IN THESE PARAGRAPHS IS THAT THE VIETNAMESE ARE NOT SERIOUS ABOUT LEARNING OR ARE INCAPABLE OF LEARNING. NEITHER IMPLICATION IS TRUE. ACCORDING TO THE AMERICAN MANAGER, APPROXIMATELY 200 VIETNAMESE WERE NORMALLY ASSIGNED FOR DUTY ON THE DAY SHIPLER VISITED THE SHOP. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT SHIPLER ARRIVED THERE THE AFTERNOON BEFORE TET, JANUARY 21, THE MOST IMPORTANT VIETNAMESE HOLIDAY, WHICH WAS ALSO A VIETNAMESE PAYDAY. IT IS LIKELY THAT MANY VIETNAMESE HAD TAKEN TIME OFF, BUT ACCORDING TO THE SHOP MANAGER, IT IS PREPOSTEROUS TO STATE THAT NOT A VIETNAMESE WAS IN SIGHT.

14. PARAS 20-30-- SHIPLER QUOTES AN AMERICAN CONTRACT EMPLOYEE AS SAYING THE MAINTENANCE SHOP WHERE HE WORKS SHOULD TURN INTO A BIG HONDA REPAIR SHOP WITHOUT THE AMERICANS. EVEN SHIPLER RECOGNIZES SUCH A STATEMENT TO BE SELF-SERVING AND EXAGGERATED, WHICH IT WAS, BUT IMPLIES THAT AN AMERICAN PRESENCE WILL HAVE TO CONTINUE INDEFINITELY "IF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE ARE TO HAVE CONTINUED USE OF THEIR COMPLEX WEAPONS." EXPERT OPINION HOLDS A PROBABLY OPPOSITE VIEW -- THAT WITHIN A VERY SHORT TIME FRAME -- AMERICAN INSTRUCTORS CAN AND WILL BE WHOLLY WITHDRAWN. IT IS NOT HIS PURPOSE TO HAVE THEM WITHDRAWN IMMEDIATELY, BEFORE THE AMERICAN LOGISTICAL TRAINING PROGRAM CAN BRING THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE TO THE SAME STANDARDS OF PROFICIENCY AS THE SOVIET AND CHINESE TRAINING TEAMS, WHICH STARTED YEARS AGO, GAVE TO THEIR PROTEGES IN THE NORTH WITH INFINITELY MORE COMPLEX SYSTEMS, SUCH



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AS SAM MISSILES. IT IS OF COURSE TRUE, AS THE "CESSNA AIRCRAFT" TECHNICIAN IS QUOTED AS SAYING IN DANANG THAT THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE ARE "PEACE MINDED" BUT NOT THE PEACE OF THE GRAVE OR TOTAL DICTATORSHIP WHICH THEY KNOW IS ALL THE OTHER SIDE HAS TO OFFER.

15. PARAS 31-32 -- SHIPLER QUOTES THE PERSONAL OPINIONS OF CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL ON VIETNAMESE ATTITUDES. THIS IS NOT DIFFICULT FOR A REPORTER TO DO WHEN SEARCHING FOR QUOTES TO HELP HIM SLANT AN ARTICLE. IT IS COMPARATIVELY EASY TO FIND AN UNINFORMED AMERICAN WHO WILL OBSERVE THAT THE VIETNAMESE DON'T CARE WHAT KIND OF GOVERNMENT THEY HAVE. CURRENT HISTORY DOES NOT SUPPORT THIS ATTITUDE. THE FACT REMAINS THAT THE VAST MAJORITY OF SOUTH VIETNAMESE PREFER THE PROTECTION OF THE GVN TO ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS UNDER THE PRG. THE PRG HAS BEEN SINGULARLY UNSUCCESSFUL IN LURING VIETNAMESE INTO VC AREAS, WHERE ONLY THREE TO FIVE PERCENT OF SOUTH VIETNAM'S CURRENT POPULATION NOW LIVES. ACCORDING TO THE KENNEDY COMMITTEE, 10-MILLION HAVE VOTED WITH THEIR FEET, PREFERRING TO ACCEPT REFUGEE STATUS RATHER THAN LIVE UNDER NVA/VC CONTROL. SHIPLER SEEMS OBLIVIOUS TO THE CONFIRMATION OF THE NONMILITARY LOGISTIC TRAINING MISSION IN WHICH THE AMERICAN CIVILIANS ARE ENGAGED WHEN HE QUOTES A TECHNICIAN AS SAYING "I WORK FOR MAY COMPANY AND I TRY TO KEEP THE AIRCRAFT FLYING. I'M WORKING ON HELICOPTERS, THAT'S ALL I KNOW." WHEREUPON SHIPLER DRAWS HIM OUT ON THE HIGHER MEANING OF IT ALL AND GETS THE OBVIOUS RESPONSE.

16. PARAS 33-35 -- SHIPLER STATES THAT THE AMERICANS' WORK HAS CARRIED SOME TO POSITIONS OF CONSIDERABLE AUTHORITY IN THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE SUPPLY SYSTEM. USE OF THE TERM "IN" IS QUESTIONABLE; CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL ARE INSTRUCTED TO WORK "WITH" AND NOT "IN" RVNAF UNITS. NO AMERICAN HAS ANY AUTHORITY IN THE RVNAF SYSTEM. IT IS TRUE, BUT OF NO SIGNIFICANCE, THAT THE RVNAF CONTINUE TO USE THE TERM "CO VAN" WHICH IS TRANSLATED AS "ADVISOR". BUT THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT AMERICANS TO WHOM VIETNAMESE APPLY THE TITLE ARE DOING THE SAME JOBS AS EARLIER AMERICANS WHO WERE CALLED "CO VAN". AFTER NEARLY 20 YEARS OF WORKING ALONGSIDE US MILITARY PERSONNEL, THE VIETNAMESE ARE ACCUSTOMED TO USING THE



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TERM "CO VAN" FOR AMERICANS WITH WHOM THEY WORK CLOSELY. THE VIETNAMESE ARE MAKING THE DECISIONS, HOWEVER, AND NOT THE AMERICANS. SHIPLER QUOTES ADAMS, A CONTRACTOR EMPLOYEE, AS SAYING "WE" WHEN REFERRING TO REORGANIZING THE SHOP AT BIET HOA. SHIPLER CALLS THIS A "REVEALING SLIP OF THE TONGUE." IT IS NATURAL TO BECOME SO IDENTIFIED WITH YOUR JOB THAT YOU SAY "WE" EVEN WHEN REFERRING TO MANAGEMENT DECISIONS OUTSIDE YOUR AUTHORITY. ANY US MISSION EMPLOYEE MIGHT WELL SAY "WE" WHEN SPEAKING OF A DECISION MADE BY THE DEPARTMENT OR THE PENTAGON. SHIPLER QUOTES AN UNNAMED DEFENSE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL AS SAYING "WE VIETNAMIZED THE FIGHTING, BUT WE NEVER VIETNAMIZED LOGISTICS." THAT IS A CORRECT STATEMENT ALTHOUGH THE INFERENCES SUBSEQUENTLY DRAWN BY SHIPLER ARE TOTALLY UNFOUNDED. HE STATES IN PARAGRAPH 38 OF HIS ARTICLE THAT "THERE IS EVIDENCE THE THE CONTACTS OCCASIONALLY CROSS INTO AREAS OF RELATIONSHIP PROHIBITED BY THE PARIS AGREEMENT." -- CONTACTS BETWEEN AMERICAN AND VIETNAMESE. SHIPLER SAYS THERE IS EVIDENCE BUT PRESENTS NONE OF IT. HE QUOTES TWO PROVISIONS OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT, BOTH OF WHICH HAVEN BEEN AND ARE BEING FULLY OBSERVED.

17. PARAS 36-38 -- SHIPLER'S STATEMENT THAT THE DAO WAS ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED TO BE DISMANTLED EARLY THIS YEAR IS AN EXAGGERATION OR POSSIBLY A MISUNDERSTANDING ON HIS PART. WHEN THE DAO WAS ESTABLISHED, THE US MISSION HOPED THAT THE CEASE FIRE WOULD BRING TOTAL CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES IN SOUTH VIETNAM. HAD THAT HAPPENED, IT WAS GENERALLY FELT THE DAO COULD COMPLETE MOST OF ITS MISSION WITHIN APPROXIMATELY A YEAR AND HAVE ITS RESIDUAL FUNCTIONS ABSORBED BY EMBASSY OR PERFORMED OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY. AT NO TIME WAS THIS A POSITIVE COMMITMENT, ALTHOUGH SOME EMBASSY OFFICERS MAY HAVE MENTIONED THE POSSIBILITY TO NEWSMEN IN THE EARLY DAYS OF THE CEASE FIRE. AS OF JANUARY 1, 1974, THERE WERE 1,015 DOD CIVILIANS IN DAO, A FACT MADE AVAILABLE TO SHIPLER BY THE EMBASSY. THERE ARE NOW 907 ACTUALLY IN SOUTH VIETNAM, SLIGHTLY FEWER THAN THE AUTHORIZED NUMBER OF SLOTS. THE NUMBER OF DAO CONTRACTOR EMPLOYEES ON JANUARY 31, 1974, WAS 2,762. ON JULY 1, 1973, THE NUMBER WAS 3,502, WHICH REPRESENTS A DROP OF 740 INSTEAD OF THE 2,200 REPORTED BY SHIPLER. HE HAS APPARENTLY CONFUSED THE JULY FIGURE WITH THE ORIGINAL TOTAL OF DAO CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL IN MARCH 1973, WHICH WAS 5,237. THE US HAS NO

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MILITARY ADVISORS IN SOUTH VIETNAM; NO ADVICE IS GIVEN THE
VIETNAMESE IN CONTRAVENTION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENTS, CON-
TRARY TO SHIPER'S UNDOCUMENTED PERSONAL OPINION.

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2391

SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

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18. PARA 41 -- THIS PARAGRAPH IS WHOLLY MISLEADING. REGARDLESS OF WHAT UNIDENTIFIED AMERICAN AND VIETNAMESE OFFICIALS AND US CIVILIANS MAY HAVE TOLD SHIPLER, THE DAO DOES NOT PERFUNCTORILY "SEE THAT THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE GET THE EQUIPMENT AND AMMUNITION THEY ASK FOR." IT IS SELF-EVIDENT THAT THE US HAS NOT GIVEN THE GVN CARTE BLANCHE, BUT IF THE POINT NEEDS EXPLANATION, SPECIFICS CAN BE CITED. FOR EXAMPLE, MORE THAN 200 AIRCRAFT TO WHICH SOUTH VIETNAM IS ENTITLED UNDER ONE-FOR-ONE REPLACEMENT PROGRAM HAVE NOT BEEN PROVIDED BY THE US. SINCE MUCH OF THE DEFENSE MATERIAL PROVIDED THE RVNAF COMES FROM US SOURCES, BOTH AS REQUIRED BY LAW AND IN THE ABSENCE OF A SOUTH VIETNAMESE INDUSTRIAL BASE, THE DAO ASSISTS THE VIETNAMESE TO RELATE THEIR NEEDS TO US SUPPLY SOURCES. THIS IS A FAR CRY FROM ADVISING THEM ON WHAT TO ASK FOR, AS SHIPLER GILIBLY SUGGESTS.

19. PARAS 42-47 -- THE CASE OF GERALD KUSH, THE REGIONAL LIAISON OFFICER WHO WAS CAPTURED IN THE PARACELS AND LATER RELEASED BY THE CHINESE, HAS BEEN WRITTEN ABOUT BY SEVERAL JOURNALISTS. HIS DUTIES WERE DESCRIBED BY THE DOD PRESS SPOKESMAN AT THE TIME OF HIS CAPTURE AND EXPLAINED TO SHIPLER BY THE EMBASSY PRESS OFFICER, WHO ALSO TOLD HIM THERE WERE 12 REGIONAL LIAISON OFFICERS IN THE COUNTRY. SHIPLER WAS TOLD THAT AN RLO DOES NOT ACT AS AN ADVISOR, ENGAGE IN COVERT OR CLANDESTINE OPERATIONS OR PARTICIPATE IN COMBAT. SHIPLER

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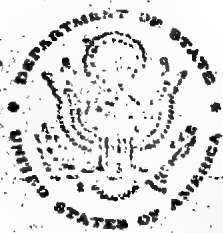
WAS SKEPTICAL AND INSISTED THAT THERE MUST BE MORE BEHIND THE WORK OF THE PLOS THAN THE USG WAS WILLING TO DISCLOSE. HE WAS ASSURED THERE WAS NOT, THAT AN RLO WAS BASICALLY EMPLOYED TO CONDUCT OVERT LIAISON WITH THE RVNAF AND REPORT ON RVNAF EFFICIENCY AND USE OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES. THE RLO ONLY COLLECTS AND TRANSMITS INFORMATION HE IS GIVEN BY THE RVNAF, SO IT IS POINTLESS TO SUGGEST THAT HIS "REPORTS END UP IN THE HANDS OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE, PERHAPS PROVIDING INDIRECT ADVICE OF ONE SORT OR ANOTHER." IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT IN SOME CASES, US LAW REQUIRES THAT AUDITS AND END-USE INSPECTIONS BE CONDUCTED BY JOINT US/VIETNAMESE TEAMS. IT IS NOT UNCOMMON FOR AN AMERICAN AND SOUTH VIETNAMESE TO MAKE AN INSPECTION OR AUDITING TOUR OF A MILITARY UNIT TOGETHER. IT IS OFTEN REQUIRED PROCEDURE.

20. PARA 48-49 -- SHIPLER IS WRONG WHEN HE REPORTS THAT AMERICANS ARE STILL STATIONED IN EVERY PROVINCE. THERE ARE FOR CONSULATES GENERAL IN VIETNAM IN ADDITION TO THE EMBASSY IN SAIGON. WHILE THERE ARE SOME VICE CONSUL AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS IN THE PROVINCES, MANY OF THEM COVER TWO OR MORE PROVINCES. ONLY A FEW DAO CIVILIANS AND NO MILITARY PERSONEL ARE STATIONED OUTSIDE THE GREATER SAIGON AREA, ASIDE FROM A FEW US MARINE GUARDS AT THE CONSULATES GENERAL.

21. PARAS 50-51 -- IT IS TRUE THAT SIX AIR FORCE GENERALS VISITED SOUTH VIETNAM LAST FALL; ANOTHER GROUP CAME RECENTLY. THEY CAME AT THE REQUEST OF THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR WHO WISHED TO BE ASSURED THAT OUR MILITARY MATERIAL AID WAS ADEQUATE, BUT FURTHER, THAT IT WAS APPROPRIATE TO THE SCALE OF ATTACKS BEING MOUNTED BY THE NVA/VC FORCES AT THE DIRECTION OF HANOI; THAT, AS REQUIRED BY LAW, WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO REPORT ACCURATELY AND PRECISELY TO THE CONGRESS. THE GENERALS WERE VERY HELPFUL AND THE AMBASSADOR HOPES THEY CAN RETURN AT APPROXIMATELY THE SAME INTERVAL IN THE FUTURE.

22. PARAS 52-56 -- WE WILL NOT SIMPLY SAY SHIPLER'S STATEMENT THAT "ALTHOUGH THE PARIS AGREEMENTS EXPLICITLY RULE OUT ADVISERS TO THE POLICE FORCE THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE NATIONAL POLICE CONTINUE TO RECEIVE REGULAR ADVICE FROM AMERICANS" IS INACCURATE, IT IS UTTERLY FALSE AND KNOWN TO BE SO BY THE

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WRITER. CERTAINLY, IT IS TRUE THAT CIA OFFICERS CONNECTED WITH THE EMBASSY MEET ROUTINELY WITH POLICE OFFICIALS. IT IS HOPED THAT THIS PRACTICE IS FOLLOWED AT EVERY EMBASSY IN THE WORLD IN A CONTINUING EFFORT TO KEEP SENIOR OFFICIALS OF THE U.S. AS WELL INFORMED AND AS CURRENTLY INFORMED AS POSSIBLE. THAT AMERICANS IN THE PROVINCES MAINTAINING CONTACT WITH LOCAL POLICE OFFICIALS MAY, OUT OF HABIT, STILL BE CALLED "ADVISERS" DOES NOT IN ANY WAY CHANGE THE FACT THAT THERE ARE NO AMERICAN ADVISERS, FORMAL OR INFORMAL, OR UNDER ANY DVICE OR COVER.

23. PARA 57 -- IT IS CORRECT THAT THE AMBASSADOR ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS TO USAID OFFICIALS IN SAIGON NOT TO DISCUSS THESE MATTERS WITH SHIPLER. HE WORKED ON THE NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE FOR MORE THAN THREE WEEKS -- IN SAIGON, BIEN HOA AND DANANG. IT BECAME OBVIOUS TO U.S. MISSION OFFICERS FROM SHIPLER'S LINE OF QUESTIONING THAT HE HAD NO INTENTION OF WRITING A REASONABLY BALANCED STORY, BUT RATHER A BIASED INDICTMENT OF THE U.S. ROLE IN VIETNAM AND THE GROSS UNREASONABLE OBSTRUCTION OF COMMUNIST OBJECTIVES. SHIPLER, THEREFORE, WAS NOT GIVEN THE KIND OF COOPERATION THE EMBASSY NORMALLY EXTENDS TO RESPONSIBLE REPORTERS, SINCE IT IS SIMPLY NOT POSSIBLE TO COOPERATE AND AND THEREBY GIVE A PLATFORM AND INFERRED CREDIBILITY TO DELIBERATE AND GROSS DISTORTIONS CALCULATED TO DECEIVE THE AMERICAN CONGRESS AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. DAO CONTRACTORS, INCIDENTALLY, WERE NOT TOLD TO REFUSE TO TALK WITH SHIPLER, AS HE ASSEKYS.

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SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01 PRS-01 PA-04 USIA-15 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 H-03 EUR-25 IO-14 L-03 ACDA-19 /170 W
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24. PARAS 58-63-- HERE WE BEGIN TO SEE THE LINK FORECAST IN HANOI PLANNING LAST FALL. THE FIGURES GIVEN IN THE KENNEDY REPORT FOR OVERALL ASSISTANCE TO POLICE PROGRAMS MAY WELL BE ACCURATE. WE SIMPLY CANNOT CONFIRM FROM HERE. IT IS IMPORTANT TO RECORD THAT THE PROVISIONS OF THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF LAST DECEMBER ARE BEING SCRUPULOUSLY COMPLIED WITH AND AT A MORE RAPID PACE THAN ACTUALLY CALLED FOR IN THE LAW ITSELF. BUT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE SHOULD BE TOLD WHY HANOI IS SO DETERMINED TO UTILIZE EVERY PRESSURE AT ITS COMMAND TO DESTROY THE POLICE PROGRAM. THE ANSWER IS SIMPLE. NO GUERRILLA SUBVERSION CAN EXIST IN A CLOSED SOCIETY. IT IS NO PROBLEM IN NORTH VIETNAM OR IN THE SOVIET UNION OR THE PRC FOR THAT MATTER. THE GUERRILLA TYPE OF SUBVERSION AND TERROR CAN ONLY EXIST IN A FREE AND OPEN SOCIETY. IN A FREE AND OPEN SOCIETY, EVEN ONE WITH WARTS, AS BOTH OURS AND THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE HAVE, THE MOST EFFECTIVE DETERRENT AGAINST TERROR AND SUBVERSION IS AN EFFECTIVE POLICE FORCE. THEREFORE, EVERY EFFORT IS MADE BY THE COMMUNISTS TO ENLIST ALL PROPAGANDA RESERVES AGAINST IT, INCLUDING THE UNWITTING. CHARGES OF REPRESSION, TERROR, BRUTALITY AND CORRUPTION MUST BE REITERATED OVER AND OVER AGAIN UNTIL IT FINALLY BECOMES IMBEDDED IN THE CONVENTIONAL WISDOM. WE SEE THE CULMINATION OF THIS PROCESS IN SHIPLER'S STATEMENT THAT "THE POLICE HERE HAVE MILITARY FUNCTIONS AND ENGAGE IN INFILTRATION, ARREST, INTERROGATION AND TORTURE OF COMMUNISTS AND POLITICAL DISSIDENTS". THE JUXTAPOSITION SHOULD BE CAREFULLY NOTED. CERTAINLY, THE POLICE ENGAGE IN "INFILTRATION ARREST". HOW ELSE CAN

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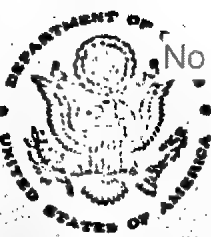
ANY FREE SOCIETY ANYWHERE DEFEND ITSELF? THEY ENGAGE IN "INTERROGATION". ANY POLICE SYSTEM ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD DOES THE SAME. AND NOW FOLLOWS INNOCENTLY THE WORD "TORTURE". NO EVIDENCE IS PRESENTED, JUST THE CHARGE. WHO IS INTERROGATED? -- "COMMUNISTS" AND NOW, INNOCENTLY AGAIN, "POLITICAL DISSIDENTS," WITH NO EVIDENCE PRESENTED. THEN FOLLOWS THE FLAT STATEMENT; "THIS ACTIVITY VIOLATES THE CEASE FIRE AGREEMENT....." IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, THERE IS SIMPLY NO CREDITABLE PROOF OF THE POLICE ACTIONS ALLEGED, NOR IS THERE THE SLIGHTEST REFERENCE BY SHIPLER TO THERE BEING ANY POSSIBILITY THAT THERE HAS BEEN ANY VIOLATION ON THE SO CALLED PRG SIDE.

25. PARAS 64 AND 65-- SHIPLER ACCURATELY RECORDS THAT THE AMBASSADOR AND MAJOR GENERAL MARRAY REFUSED REQUESTS BY THE NEW YORK TIMES FOR INTERVIEWS. THE REASON IS OBVIOUS. TO DO SO WOULD PERMIT THEIR OWN REPUTATIONS FOR INTEGRITY TO BE USED AS A PLATFORM FOR PROMOTING A CAMPAIGN TO GROSSLY DECEIVE THE AMERICAN CONGRESS AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. NEITHER WILL PERMIT THIS, ALTHOUGH THEY QUITE FREELY SEE MOST REPUTABLE JOURNALISTS WHO REQUEST INTERVIEWS. AS STATED EARLIER, NO INSTRUCTIONS WERE ISSUED TO CONTRACTORS TO SHUN NEWSPERSONS WHO APPARENTLY, ON THEIR OWN, ALSO DO NOT WISH TO BE USED IN A CAMPAIGN TO DECEIVE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. THE COMMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO THE AMBASSADOR, FROM A SECOND HAND SOURCE, ARE ALSO WITHOUT FOUNDATION.

26. PARA 66-- THE USG HAS NEVER MADE A SECRET OF THE FACT THAT IT INTENDS TO REPLACE SOME F-5A JET AIRCRAFT WITH FASTER, MORE MANEUVERABLE F-5ES. IN THE UOD PRESS BRIEFING OF JANUARY 8, 1974, LTGEN JAMES SAID THAT THIS WAS NO NEW INFORMATION. "WE HAVE SAID ALL ALONG," HE TOLD REPORTERS, "THAT WE HAD SUPPLIED THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE WITH THE F-5 TIGER ONE, WHICH WAS THE EARLIEST F-5, AND THAT CONSIDERABLE IMPROVEMENTS HAD BEEN MADE ON SUBSEQUENT MODELS THAT WE HAD CONTRACTED TO PROVIDE THEM, AND THESE OLD AIRCRAFT WOULD BE REPLACED ON A ONE-FOR-ONE BASIS. THIS WILL BE DONE IN TIME...." THE USG DOES NOT REGARD REPLACEMENT OF SOME F-5A AIRCRAFT WITH THE LATER F-5E AS A VIOLATION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENTS. THE F-5E IS SIMPLY A NEWER VERSION OF THE F-5A, WHICH IS NO LONGER AVAILABLE.

27. PARAS 67 AND 68-- SHIPLER STATES THAT A HIGH-RANKING OFFICIAL OF "ONE OF THE NON-COMMUNIST DELEGATIONS, ASKED RECENTLY IF HE THOUGHT THE U.S. WAS FAITHFULLY OBSERVING THE ONE-FOR-ONE RULE".

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REPLIED, "OF COURSE NOT," THE ICCS OFFICIAL WAS QUITE RIGHT, BUT NOT IN THE WAY SHIPLER IMPLIES. AS A MATTER OF FACT, THE USG UNFORTUNATELY HAS NOT BEEN ABLE IN ONE SINGLE CATEGORY TO PROVIDE ONE-FOR-ONE REPLACEMENTS OF ALL THE MATERIAL LOST BY THE GVN WHILE DEFENDING ITSELF FROM CONTINUING NVA/VC AGGRESSION SINCE THE CEASE FIRE. ARTICLE VII OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT SPECIFIES THAT THE TWO SOUTH VIETNAMESE PARTIES SHALL NOT ACCEPT INTRODUCTION OF TROOPS, MILITARY ADVISERS AND MILITARY PERSONNEL INCLUDING ARMAMENTS, MUNITIONS AND WAR MATERIAL INTO SOUTH VIETNAM. BOTH PARTIES, HOWEVER, ARE PERMITTED TO MAKE PERIODIC REPLACEMENTS OF ARMAMENTS, MUNITIONS AND WAR MATERIAL WHICH HAVE BEEN DESTROYED, DAMAGED, WORN OUT OR USED UP AFTER THE CEASE FIRE ON THE BASIS OF PIECE-FOR-PIECE, OF THE SAME CHARACTERISTICS AND PROPERTIES, UNDER SUPERVISION OF THE JOINT MILITARY COMMISSION (TPJMC) AND OF THE ICCS. ARTICLE 18 (C) GIVES THE ICCS SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING PROHIBITION UNDER ARTICLE VII. THE ICCS PROTOCOL SPECIFIES THE DESIGNATION OF ICCS TEAMS AT POINTS OF ENTRY, SOME OF WHICH ARE LISTED IN PARAGRAPH B OF ARTICLE 4, AND SOME ARE TO BE DESIGNATED BY THE TWO SOUTH VIETNAMESE PARTIES. THESE PERTINENT SECTIONS OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT AND OF THE ICCS PROTOCOL HAVE NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED BECAUSE OF THE INABILITY OF THE TPJMC TO REACH AGREEMENT ON EITHER DESIGNATED POINTS OF ENTRY OR THE "MODALITIES" OF THE CONTROL AND SUPERVISION OF MILITARY SHIPMENTS. THE RECORD SHOWS THERE HAS BEEN CONSIDERABLE UNWILLINGNESS ON THE PART OF THE SO CALLED PRG TO HELP THE ICCS DEPLOY TO SITES IN TERRITORY CONTROLLED BY THE VIET CONG, WHILE THE GVN HAS DESIGNATED THE ADDITIONAL POINTS OF ENTRY, AS

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REQUIRED, THE PRG HAS REFUSED TO DO SO. THE PRG, AS A MATTER OF FACT, HAS TRIED TO PREVENT DEPLOYMENT OF ICCS TEAMS. FOR EXAMPLE, AN ICCS HELICOPTER TAKING A TEAM IN APRIL 1973 TO THE ENTRY POINT OF LAO BAO IN PRG TERRITORY WAS SHOT DOWN CLAIMING THE LIVES OF SEVERAL ICCS MEMBERS AND THE AMERICAN CREW. IT IS UNJUST FOR SHIPLER TO SAY THAT THE SAIGON SIDE IS UNLIKELY TO GRANT PERMISSION TO SUPERVISE REPLACEMENT OF WEAPONRY FOR SOUTH VIETNAM. THE GVN HAS INDICATED ITS WILLINGNESS, TIME AND TIME AGAIN, TO COOPERATE WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT AND PROTOCOLS PROVIDED THE OTHER SIDE DISPLAYS A SIMILAR COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE. THUS, THE ACTIVITIES OF THE POINT OF ENTRY TEAMS HAVE BEEN FRUSTRATED. AT THE BEGINNING, ON A UNILATERAL BASIS, THE CANADIAN AND INDONESIAN DELEGATIONS JOINED IN INVOLVING THEMSELVES IN SUPERVISION AND CONTROL OF MILITARY SHIPMENTS AND THE GVN DID NOT OBJECT TO THIS. SHIPLER DOES NOT POINT OUT THAT THE ICCS HAS NO SUPERVISION WHATEVER OF MILITARY SHIPMENTS COMING INTO SOUTH VIETNAM FROM THE NORTH. NOR DOES HE MENTION ANYWHERE IN HIS ARTICLE THE INFILTRATION OF COMBAT TROOPS FROM NORTH VIETNAM SINCE THE CEASE FIRE, A FACT WELL KNOWN TO HIM.

28. PARAS 69-70--THE SHIPLER QUOTATION OF AMBASSADOR DURBROW ENDS THE ARTICLE CONSISTENTLY ON ANOTHER DISTORTION. ACCORDING TO OTHER SOURCES, DURBROW WAS MAKING THE POINT THAT NO ONE COULD EXPECT THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE UNILATERALLY TO OBSERVE THE CEASE FIRE IF THE OTHER SIDE IGNORES IT COMPLETELY. MOST AMERICANS, WE EXPECT,

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WOULD AGREE.

29. IN SUMMARY, THE SHIPLER ARTICLE WAS OBVIOUSLY NOT WRITTEN TO INFORM NEW YORK TIMES READERS BUT TO GIVE A SLANTED IMPRESSION THAT THE USG AND GVN ARE GROSSLY VIOLATING THE CASE FIRE AGREEMENT AND PREVENTING ANY KIND OF PEACEFUL POLITICAL ACCOMMODATION WITH THE COMMUNISTS. THE ARTICLE CONTAINS NUMEROUS INACCURACIES AND HALF-TRUTHS. IT DELIBERATELY OMITTS OR TREATS SKEPTICALLY THE FLAGRANT COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS OF THE PARIS ACCORDS, ALL OF WHICH HAVE BEEN POINTED OUT REPEATEDLY TO SHIPLER AND THE NY TIMES SAIGON BUREAU BY USG AND GVN OFFICIALS.

30. BOTH SECSTATE AND SECDEF MAY RELEASE THIS MESSAGE, OR PORTIONS OF IT, EITHER TO THE CONGRESS OR THE PRESS IF THEY DEEM IT USEFUL TO DO SO. EMBASSY BELIEVES THE SHIPLER STORY AND THIS RESPONSE MIGHT WELL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE COLUMBIA GRADUATE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AS A CASE STUDY OF PROPAGANDA UNDER THE GUISE OF "INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING" RATHER THAN A RESPONSIBLE JOURNALISTIC EFFORT.
MARTIN

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02/25/74

Vast Aid From U.S. Backs Saigon in Continuing War

By DAVID K. SHIPLER

Special to The New York Times

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Feb. 16—Ray Harris of Ponca City, Okla., has come back to Vietnam. This time he is not behind the machine gun of an Army helicopter but behind a workbench at the Bien Hoa air base, sitting next to South Vietnamese Air Force men and repairing jet fighter engines.

Mr. Harris is a civilian now, safer and better paid. But his changed role in the continuing Vietnam war has scarcely diminished his importance, for as a 27-year-old jet-engine mechanic he remains as vital to the South Vietnamese military as he was in 1966 as a 19-year-old helicopter gunner.

He is among 2,800 American civilians without whose skills South Vietnam's most

sophisticated weapons would fall into disrepair. Employed by private companies under contract to the United States Defense Department, these men constitute one facet of a vast program of American military aid that continues to set the course of the war more than a year after the signing of the Paris peace agreements and the final withdrawal of American troops.

Whether the United States is breaking the letter of the agreements could probably be argued either way. But certainly the aid directly supports South Vietnamese violations and so breaks the spirit of the accords.

The United States, far from phasing out its military in-

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U.S. Workers and Vast Aid Support Saigon in Continuing War

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involvement in South Vietnam, has descended from a peak of warfare to a high plateau of substantial support, dispatching not only huge quantities of weapons and ammunition but also large numbers of American citizens who have become integral parts of the South Vietnamese supply, transport and intelligence systems.

These include not just the Vietnam-based mechanics and technicians but also the Pentagon-based generals who tour airfields to ascertain the needs of the South Vietnamese Air Force, the "liaison men" who reportedly give military advice from time to time, the civilian Defense Department employees who make two-to-three-week visits to provide highly specialized technical help, and the Central Intelligence Agency officials who continue to advise South Vietnam's national police on intelligence matters.

The total budgeted cost of military aid to South Vietnam is \$813-million in this fiscal year, and the Pentagon has asked Congress for \$1.45-billion next year, with most of the increase probably going for ammunition, which the South Vietnamese forces have expended at a high rate.

True Cost Even Higher

The true costs of the military support probably rise considerably above the official figures. Some of the aid, for example, comes in through economic programs that dump millions in cash into the Saigon Government's defense budget. And other costs—salaries of Pentagon technicians who make special visits, for example—are hidden in the vast budgets of the United States Air Force, Army and Navy and are not labeled "Vietnam."

These valuable military goods and services have a sharp political impact. They are indispensable to the South Vietnamese Government's policy of resistance to any accommodation with the Communists. Militarily, the extensive aid has enabled President Nguyen Van Thieu to take the offensive at times, launching intensive attacks with artillery and jet fighters against Vietcong-held territory.

Furthermore, the American-financed military shield has provided Mr. Thieu with the muscle to forestall a political settlement. He has rejected the Paris agreements' provision for general elections, in which the Communists would be given ~~access to the press, permission~~ to run candidates and freedom to rally support openly and without interference from the police.

Vietcong Maintain Pressure

Mr. Thieu has offered elections, but without the freedoms. The Vietcong, refusing to participate unless the freedoms are guaranteed, have maintained military pressure throughout the country, mostly with artillery and rocket attacks on Government outposts and, from time to time, with devastating ground assaults against Government-held positions.

United States intelligence officials contend that continuing American aerial reconnaissance, as well as prisoner interrogation and radio monitoring shows that the North Vietnamese have sent thousands of troops and hundreds of tanks and artillery pieces south in violation of the Paris agreements. They have also refurbished a dozen captured airfields and built a large network of roads that threatened to cut South Vietnam in two.

Yet in battle the Communists appear more frugal with ammunition than the Government troops, who have been seen recently by Western correspondents spraying artillery across wide areas under Vietcong control as if there was no end to the supply of shells. This difference has bolstered the view of some diplomats that China and the Soviet Union, unwilling to support an all-out offensive now, have placed limits on the rate of resupply to Hanoi.

Amid the political stalemate then, the inconclusive war continues.

Keeping Jets in the Air

Ray Harris is at his workbench in the huge engine shop at the Bien Hoa air base just north of Saigon. He works for General Electric, which manufactures the jet engine that drives the Northrop F-5 fighter, the mainstay of Saigon's air force.

He hunches over a circular fuser assembly, the last part of the engine before the afterburner. The assembly is invisibly cracked, and Mr. Harris is using a machine about the size of a dentist's drill to grind down the metal so the crack can be welded.

There are Americans everywhere in the shop, which is devoted to repairing and overhauling fighter and helicopter engines. There is virtually no workroom or machine or assembly line where Americans are anything less than essential parts of the process. Although a few are training Vietnamese to take over the work eventually, most are simply doing the work, especially the highly technical jobs, themselves.

The line where rebuilt jet engines are finally assembled, for example, looks more like a factory somewhere in the

United States than a shop belonging to the Vietnamese Air Force. Eight or 10 Americans work on several engines, and not a Vietnamese is in sight.

There are 25 Vietnamese assigned here, a technician says with a shrug, but he adds, "I never see them."

Output Is Kept High

Ken Martin of G.E. is crouching with another American beside a jet engine that he has just assembled himself in four 12-hour days. Without the American technicians, he says, the shop could produce no more than 40 per cent of what it does. Another American, asked what would happen if he and his colleagues pulled out, replied, "This would turn into a big Honda repair shop."

As self-serving and exaggerated as these assessments seem, they underscore the long-term military role that American civilians will have to play if the South Vietnamese are to have continued use of their complex weapons.

Without long training, mechanics in any modern air force probably could not match the skills of the American technicians, most of whom are not young Vietnam war veterans like Mr. Harris but seasoned experts who have been building and rebuilding engines for years on bases here and in the United States.

"Most of our people—this is the only work they've ever done," said Glenn Miller, the 47-year-old G.E. supervisor at the shop. Mr. Miller has 22 years' experience with the company, all on jet engines.

His men are so vital that they—and those working on helicopters for Lycoming Aircraft—were all placed on 12-hour shifts last month during the week before Tet, the Lunar New Year holiday. Their objective was to get as many aircraft flying as possible, Mr. Miller explained, to be ready for any Communist offensive.

\$1,000 in a Long Week

Mr. Miller figures that with overtime and other bonuses, some of the men made \$1,000 apiece that week.

High pay is cited by many of the civilians as the main reason for their choice of Vietnam as a place of work. After a year on the job G.E. employees get double their base salaries, bringing the average pay to \$20,000 or more, plus \$16 a day for food and lodging—an annual total in excess of \$25,000.

Since living costs are low by American standards, and since the employees do not have to pay any Federal income tax on \$20,000 a year if they are off American soil for at least 18 months, many say they save a good deal of money. Some add that the money has become a silent source of resentment among the Vietnamese Air Force men, who earn only \$10 to \$35 a month.

This, plus profound war-weariness, has made many Vietnamese men difficult to teach, the contractors say. "They are only kids, all of them—they don't want to be in the military to begin with," said Elmer Adams, a former United States Air Force man who works for Lycoming supervising helicopter repairs.

"It's a lack of desire," said a technician for Cessna Aircraft working at the Da Nang air base. "They've been under so much pressure for so long they just want peace. They're peace-minded."

Criticism of Americans
and the [redacted] man went on: "All they know is that Americans came over here and tore up their country, uprooted their villages and now they're looking for food."

Gilbert Walker, another technician, who asked that his company not be identified, observed: "The people I talk to in town care very little about the form of government they have, I guess I don't feel much difference. I don't feel too much admiration for the present Government."

In that case, he was asked, why is he helping the South Vietnamese carry on the war? "I work for my company and I try to keep the aircraft flying," he replied. "I'm working on helicopters, that's all I know. Sometimes I sit back and think, What's it all for, what's the good of it all? It seems like an exercise in futility, what I'm doing."

Futile or not, the Americans' work has carried some of them to positions of considerable authority in the South Vietnamese military supply system. The South Vietnamese still call many of them "co van," which means "advisers," and the American office at the Da Nang base has a big sign over the door that reads, "Co Van."

The Americans often come to identify closely with their jobs, perhaps taking more responsibility than their contracts call for. In a revealing slip of the tongue, Mr. Adams of Lycoming looked around the Bien Hoa engine shop and remarked, "We're in the process—they're in the process, rather—of reorganizing the shop."

Many Still on Payroll

The fact is that supply and transportation have remained an American operation. "We Vietnamized the fighting, but we never Vietnamized logistics," said a Defense Department official based in Saigon.

That is reportedly the principal reason the United States Defense Attaché's Office—originally scheduled to be dismantled early this year—still contains about 1,150 people, of whom 50 are military men, according to official figures.

In addition, the reduction in the number of Americans working for private defense contractors has halted, allowing the figure to level off at approximately 2,800, down 2,200 since July, according to a spokesman for the Defense Attaché's office.

The logistics effort—provision of maintenance, ammunition, weapons, trucks, fuel, electronics parts and the like—is now the basis for the Americans' most pervasive and intimate contacts with the South Vietnamese military. Depending on how such terms as "military" and "advisers" are defined, there is evidence that the contacts occasionally cross into areas of relationship prohibited by the Paris agreements.

"The United States will not continue its military involvement or intervene in the internal affairs of South Vietnam," Article 4 of the cease-fire agreement declares.

'Total Withdrawal'

Article 5 says: "Within 60 days of the signing of this agreement, there will be a total withdrawal from South Vietnam of troops, military advisers and military personnel, including technical military personnel and military personnel associated with the pacification program, armaments, munitions and war material of the United States and those of the other foreign countries mentioned in Article 3(a). Advisers from the above-mentioned countries to all paramilitary organizations and the police force will also be withdrawn within the same period of time."

According to both American and South Vietnamese officials, the American civilians—both employees of private companies and those of the Defense Department—who help with supply activities not only see that the South Vietnamese get the equipment and ammunition they ask for but also advise them on what to ask for.

Some of these activities came to light as a result of the capture by the Chinese last month of a former United States Army Special Forces captain, Gerald E. Kosh, who was aboard a South Vietnamese naval vessel during a two-day battle with Chinese forces in the Paracel Islands, in the South China Sea.

Mr. Kosh, who was taken prisoner and later released,

was described by a spokesman for the United States Embassy as a "liaison officer" with the South Vietnamese military whose job was to observe the efficiency of various army, navy and air force units and report to the Pentagon.

American officials steadfastly refused to provide further details of Mr. Kosh's job. They would not say exactly what he was supposed to observe or whether his reports were, ultimately shared with the South Vietnamese. They did say that there were 12 such liaison men based in various parts of Vietnam.

Extent of Role Unclear

What is not clear is whether they confine their observations to such matters as the condition of equipment and the rate of ammunition expenditure, or whether they evaluate military tactics and strategies and go so far as to suggest alternatives.

What is fairly certain is that their reports end up in the hands of the South Vietnamese, perhaps providing indirect advice of one sort or another. A South Vietnamese officer in a position to know said recently that normal procedure called for an American and a South Vietnamese to make an inspection or auditing tour of a military unit together. Then they write up their reports, sometimes separately, sometimes together. The reports, he said, are forwarded up the chain of command in the United States Defense Attaché's Office, which then relays copies of them to Lieut. Gen. Dong Van Khuyen, head of the Logistic Command for the South Vietnamese Joint General Staff.

More direct, overt advice is sometimes given by zealous Americans who are still stationed in every province. An embassy official reported recently that an American based in one province boasted to him about a successful military operation: "I told them to clear the Communists out of there."

Actually, South Vietnamese military men do not seem anxious for such guidance, noting with some pain that their country has suffered for years under American advice. What they want from the United States is military aid.

Six Generals Pay a Visit

Clearly, the Pentagon continues to attach high priority to the success of the South Vietnamese military. Last fall a group of six Air Force generals based in the Pentagon visited the Da Nang air base to find out what equipment and aid were needed, according to the base commander, Lieut. Col. Nguyen Tan Dinh. He said they were scheduled to come again this month.

A few weeks ago two civilian employees of the Air Force—one based in Hawaii and the other in Texas—were flown to Vietnam for a short stay so they could give advice on the repair and upkeep of plants that manufacture oxygen for jet fighters. One said he had been in and out of Vietnam

frequently on similar missions since 1964, the other since 1968.

Although the Paris agreements explicitly rule out advisers to the police force, the South Vietnamese National Police continue to receive regular advice from Americans.

In a recent conversation with this correspondent, two high-ranking officers said they and their staffs met frequently with the Saigon station chief of the C.I.A. and his staff. Sometimes, they said, the C.I.A. chief asks the police to gather intelligence for him, and often they meet to help each other analyze the data collected.

A police official confirmed that in some provinces "American liaison men" who work with the police remain on the job. "There are still some, but not so many," he said.

Episode in Police Station

Local policemen still refer to "American police advisers," according to James M. Markham, Saigon bureau chief of The New York Times, who was detained by the police late in January after a visit to a Vietcong-held area.

Mr. Markham said that in both Qui Nhon, where he was held overnight, and Phan Thiet, where he was detained briefly while being transferred to Saigon, policemen, talking among themselves, referred to the "police adviser." In Phan Thiet, he reported, a policeman was overheard saying, "Let's get the American police adviser over here."

In the last six weeks The New York Times has made repeated attempts to interview officials in the United States Agency for International Development who are responsible for American aid to the police. Although the officials appeared ready to discuss the subject, they were ordered by the United States Ambassador, Graham A. Martin, to say nothing.

In the absence of official United States figures, the best source for aid to the police is Senator Edward M. Kennedy, who calculated that as of last June 30 the Agency for International Development and the Defense Department has spent \$131.7-million over the years for police and prisons in South Vietnam. Despite a Congressional ban on such assistance enacted last December, such support has continued, according to American officials, but they say that no decision has yet been made on how to phase out the programs.

Section 112 of the new foreign aid bill reads: "None of the funds appropriated or made available pursuant to this act and no local currencies generated as a result of assistance furnished under this act may be used for the support of police or prison construction and administration within South Vietnam, for training, including computer training, of South Vietnamese with respect to police, criminal or prison matters, or for computers, or computer parts for use for South Vietnam with respect to police, criminal or prison matters."

Training in Washington

South Vietnamese policemen are reportedly still being trained at the International Police Academy in Washington, and technical contracts with private companies that provide computer services and communication equipment have not been terminated.

Senator Kennedy reported that the Nixon Administration had requested \$869,000 for the current fiscal year for police computer training, \$256,000 for direct training of policemen, \$1.5-million for police communications and \$8.8-million for police equipment, presumably weapons and ammunition, from the Defense Department.

Although these figures are not normally included in the totals for military aid, the police here have military functions, and engage in infiltration, arrest, interrogation and torture of Communists and political dissidents.

This activity violates the cease-fire agreement, which states in Article 11: "Immediately after the cease-fire, the two South Vietnamese parties will . . . prohibit all acts of reprisal and discrimination against individuals or organizations that have collaborated with one side or the other, insure . . . freedom of organization, freedom of political activities, freedom of belief."

Interviews Are Refused

Not only has Ambassador Martin ordered American officials to remain silent on the subjects of military and police aid, both he and the Defense

Attaché, Maj. Gen. John E. Murray, refused requests by The New York Times for interviews. Furthermore, the embassy told at least two private companies — Lear - Siegler, which employs a large force of aircraft mechanics here, and Computer Science Corporation, which works on military and police computer systems — to say nothing publicly about their work, according to company executives.

The official nervousness is attributed by an embassy employee to the Nixon Administration's apprehension about the inclination of Congress to cut aid to South Vietnam. The Ambassador has reportedly told several non-Government visitors recently that South Vietnam is in a crucial period and that he sees his role as unyielding support to build up and preserve a non-Communist regime.

He is reported to have pressed Washington to provide new weapons for Saigon to counteract the infiltration of troops, tanks and artillery from North Vietnam since the cease-fire. For example, plans have been made for the delivery of F-5E fighter planes to replace the slower, less maneuverable and less heavily armed F-5's, many of which were rushed to South Vietnam in the weeks before the cease-fire.

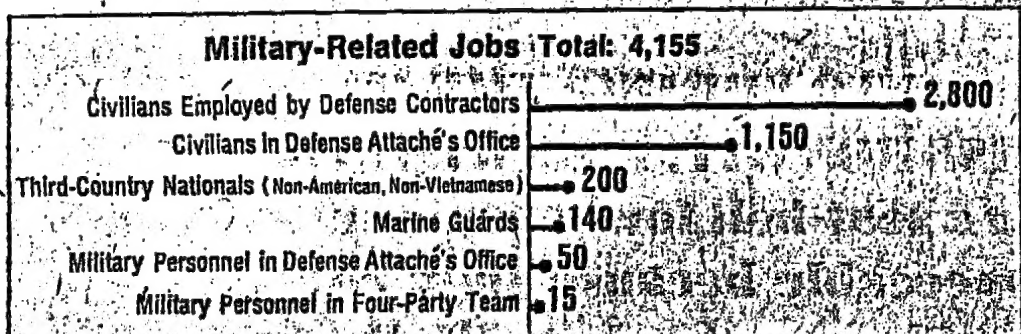
Violation Is Charged

Privately, officers in the International Commission of Control and Supervision scoff at the American contention that supply of the planes does not violate the Paris agreements, which permit only one-for-one replacement of weapons "of the same characteristics and properties." A high-ranking official of one of the non-Communist delegations, asked recently if he thought the United States was faithfully observing the one-for-one rule, replied, "Of course not."

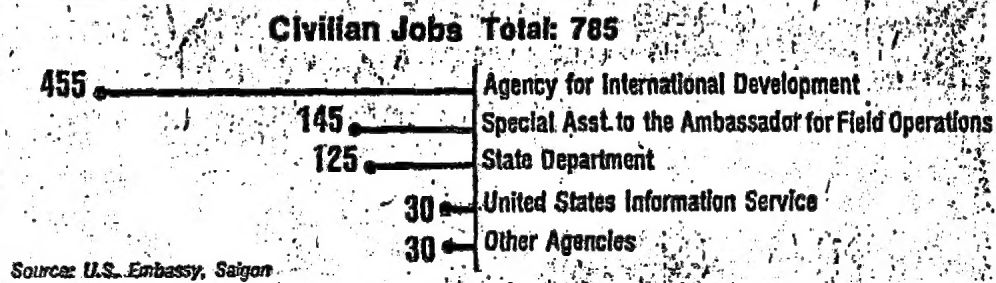
There is nothing the commission can do about it without permission from both the South Vietnamese Government and the Vietcong to investigate, and permission is unlikely to be forthcoming from the Saigon side. Similarly, the commission has been unable to audit other incoming weapons and ammunition for both sides. During the first year after the cease-fire, the United States provided South Vietnam with \$5.4-million worth of ammunition a week, apparently unaccompanied by pressure to restrain military activities.

Several weeks ago Elbridge Durbrow, who was Ambassador to South Vietnam from 1957 to 1961, came to Saigon and met with Ambassador Martin and General Murray. Mr. Durbrow, who denounced the Paris agreements and who declares, "I am a domino-theory man," was asked by newsmen whether the American officials had indicated that they were trying to keep South Vietnam from violating the cease-fire.

"Not from anybody did we hear that," he replied. Then, referring to General Murray, he said: "He's not that kind of man at all—just the opposite. If you are not going to defend yourself you might as well give up and let Hanoi take over."



U.S. Employees in South Vietnam



The New York Times/Feb. 23, 1974

Photograph by Nguyen Ngoc Luong